

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAB-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05

CCO-00 SSO-00 /088 W

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R 211504Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8523

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 02712

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, EG

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR SECOND BRITISH CLEARANCE OF SUEZ
CANAL

SUMMARY: BRITISH HAVE RECEIVED SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY'S
REQUEST FOR SECOND CLEARANCE OF EXPLOSIVES FROM SUEZ
CANAL. THEY ARE HESITANT BECAUSE OF POSSIBILITY GETTING
CAUGHT IN RENEWED FIGHTING, BUT WILL BE RESPONSIVE IF
EGYPTIANS CONFIRM THEIR REQUEST THROUGH POLITICAL
CHANNELS. END SUMMARY.

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1. BRITISH HAVE RECEIVED REQUEST FROM SUEZ CANAL

AUTHORITY FOR ANOTHER SWEEP OF SUEZ CANAL. IT WOULD APPEAR THERE ARE STILL EXPLOSIVES IN IT, MAINLY AS RESULT OF ITEMS BEING DUMPED INTO CANAL IN PROCESS OF EGYPTIAN CLEARING WORK ALONG ITS SIDES. THIS OPERATION LIKELY TO TAKE NO MORE THAN A COUPLE OF MONTHS.

2. BRITISH NAVY IS RELUCTANT TO RELEASE TWO MINESWEEPERS AND SUPPORT SHIP TO DO THE JOB BEFORE MAY. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO SEND ONE MINESWEEPER WITHOUT SUPPORT SHIP BY END OF MARCH AT EARLIEST. THIS IS STILL BEING NEGOTIATED BY FCO WITH MOD.

3. ONCE MOD CLEARANCE RECEIVED, FCO INTENDS TO RAISE THE QUESTION IN POLITICAL CHANNELS, PROBABLY BY INSTRUCTING ITS AMBASSADOR IN CAIRO TO APPROACH SOMEBODY SUCH AS FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY. IF EGYPTIANS AT POLITICAL LEVEL CONFIRM DESIRE FOR EARLY CLEARANCE OF CANAL, BRITISH HOPE TO BE IN POSITION TO SEND ONE MINESWEEPER BY END OF MARCH OR EARLY APRIL, FOLLOWED BY OTHER MINESWEEPER AND SUPPORT SHIP LATER.

4. MAIN FACTOR IN FCO'S CONSIDERATION IS FEAR OF GETTING SHIPS CAUGHT IN ANY NEW OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING. AT OFFICIAL LEVEL THEY ARE PREPARED TO RISK SINGLE MINESWEEPER, HOPING THAT IT COULD BE BROUGHT TO ALEXANDRIA OR OUT TO SEA IF WAR CLOUDS GATHERED. WHOLE MATTER WOULD BE PUT TO MINISTERS AFTER PREPARATORY WORK DONE.

SPIERS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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05 JUL 2006

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